

of moral problems. The sermons are contemporaneous with the whole course of the war, and patriotism, penitence, forgiveness, justice, love had to be considered again and again in this connexion. Candid readers may differ as to where they are entirely willing to accept Dr Burney's teaching on these subjects, but will agree that his academic conscience is quite uncommonly in harmony with the Gospel, and that his academic breeding has made him as courageous as he is void of offence. A third point comes out of the last sermon in the volume. Here Dr Burney commends the study of the Old Testament by the example of our Lord, and thus completes a thought which runs through all the sermons, namely that the Old Testament fulfills its purpose by means of its limitations. Finally, we realize as we lay the book down what *pectus facit theologum* truly means. Our soul has been purged and revived in reading. A good deal that we had already learned from the commentary on Judges has been presented to us freshly; this time as prophecy, with pastoral affection, with the warmth of piety. Yet even this in an uncommon manner; with a scholar's certainty, a scholar's modesty, with 'faith unfeigned'.

Just once a doubtful illustration has intruded; an illustration merely, the argument would work as well without it: but it is doubtful whether we should any longer introduce the word *kenosis* from Philippians into any theory of our Lord's human knowledge; see articles in the JOURNAL July 1909, April 1911, October 1914.

A. NAIRNE.

Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des guerres de religion jusqu'à nos jours, by HENRI BREMOND, vols. i, ii, iv, and v. (Bloud et Gay, Paris, 1916-1920.)

THOUGH the JOURNAL did not notice this masterpiece, when the first two volumes appeared, it was not from any failure to recognize their value. It is a pleasure to draw attention to them now, and to commend the whole work to theologians, historians, psychologists, and lovers of French literature. There is matter here to benefit and delight them all. M. Bremond carries his amazing learning like a feather, and there is not a dull or uninteresting page in the two thousand odd he has already printed. It is literal truth that no man alive is so well qualified as M. Bremond for the discharge of the immense task which he has set himself, and that he is doing it as he alone is able. We trust he may have health and strength to carry to completion what he has so brilliantly begun.

It is a *literary* history of religious sentiment, i. e. a history as told in printed books—the tract, the sermon, the biography, the volume of philosophy or verse—not antiquarian, dug out of archives. But it is *religious*; the aesthetic value of the writers is throughout kept subordinate to their piety. An artist like M. Bremond cannot neglect the literary aspect of the characters which he brings upon the scene, and he abounds in opinions and judgements of rare penetration. But the object to which he loyally adheres, and which (so far as he has gone, for he has not reached the Quietist dispute) he certainly may claim to have attained, is to set forth the religious life of France in the seventeenth century. He begins with *L'Humanisme dévot*, 1580–1660 (vol. i), i. e. the consecration and application to life of the Renaissance *joie de vivre* and glad acknowledgement of human worth and dignity. The hero of this volume is Saint François de Sales: its subject, the progress and manifestation of his spirit through his school. Vol. ii, *L'Invasion mystique*, 1590–1620, traces the beginnings of seventeenth-century mysticism which took root in ground prepared by the humanists: the coming of the Discalced Carmelites, the reform of the nunneries, &c. Here again St Francis stands supreme, setting his seal upon the movement begun by Père Cotin, Pierre de Bérulle, Benoît de Canfeld, and others. Vols. iv and v, *La Conquête mystique, l'École de Port-Royal, l'École du Père Lallemant*, tell their story by their titles. It is the great conflict between Jansenist and Jesuit theory and practice, between moral philosophy and mysticism, ending in the Pyrrhic victory of the former. Vol. iii, which has not yet appeared, promises us an account of *L'École française*.

The importance of M. Bremond's undertaking is as great for the historian as it is for the theologian, for in the words of M. Lavissee quoted by our author, 'négliger les choses religieuses du xvii^e siècle ou les estimer petitement, c'est ne pas comprendre l'histoire de ce siècle, c'est ne pas le sentir'. We may go further and add, 'c'est ne pas comprendre la France'; for the France of to-day has its deep roots in the seventeenth century, an age which for moral, intellectual, and spiritual achievement may challenge comparison with any, when 'all the qualities which we admire in our allies—clarity, sincerity, taste—came to their perfect flower.

Yet M. Bremond's outlook is deliberately limited: 'Cet enclos', he says, 'est exclusivement catholique'—Protestant readers may be allowed to point out the unintentional irony of the epithet—and the only heterodox with whom he deals at length are the Jansenists. On these, their origins and developements, their influence on religious life, he says, if not the last word, yet a great deal that modern readers, and especially English readers, should lay seriously to heart. For we are

most of us under the spell of Port-Royal. Its attraction for Englishmen is extraordinary but easily explicable. The nuns and the Solitaries were Puritans and anti-papalists; they were saints—not canonized indeed, but truly saints in the original sense of the term; they were martyrs. There is high romance in their story as M. Bremond himself recognizes (iv p. 283); they have their great romantic historian, Sainte-Beuve. They had until within a few months of his death and they claimed as their inalienable possession the man before whom even to-day science and philosophy stand bare-headed, Blaise Pascal. All this poetry has helped to blind us to the inhumanity of their creed and the grotesque impossibility of their conduct. M. Bremond exposes both with unflinching hand. He strips Saint-Cyran of the bright and many-coloured robe in which Sainte-Beuve arrayed him, and shews him for what he really was—not a great moral reformer or leader of men, not a true mystic, not even a formidable conspirator, but a poor thing, at best a revivalist preacher, at worst a mild megalomaniac. He shews conclusively that the real founder of the sect was Antoine Arnauld, a man breathing and inspiring controversy, with no real vision of high things, living to snatch momentary victory at the cannon's mouth, nay, himself a piece of ordnance—'une mitrailleuse théologique en mouvement perpétuel'. He argues that the system inaugurated by Arnauld effectually dried up in the second half of the century the springs of contemplative devotion which flowed freely in the first half, and that the chief siccific agent was Pierre Nicole, a half-hearted Jansenist, but a whole-hearted anti-mystic.

Taken as a whole, M. Bremond's indictment of the school of Arnauld, severe but not unchristian, seems to be unanswerable. But on his last point, the influence of Jansenism in checking the mystical current, a counter-plea may be put in. The Society of Jesus, which produced many authentic and splendid mystics, Alvarez, Surin, Lallemant—not to mention Edmund Campion—which took its marching orders from a man who saw visions and from a book, the *Ejercicios espirituales*, essentially mystical in its main tenets, was as a practical organization hostile to mysticism. We have only to read the story of the opposition offered to Lallemant and Surin by those of their own house (v pp. 267–276). The Order was divided against itself: 'le duel devient pathétique, jésuites contre jésuites.' And although Surin enlists our sympathy and compassion, it would be unfair lightly to condemn the hostile majority of his brethren. For mysticism, as they saw, contains a dangerous element. Few can walk in the enchanted garden and take no harm; the many are apt to pluck the poison flowers of Molinosism. And as a fact all the wisdom of the Church is needed to distinguish contemplative Saints from Quietists. The ordinary confessor whose business is

with ordinary souls and who has not himself the rare gift of true contemplation is almost bound to mistrust and condemn ecstasy as extravagance.

If it is clear that Surin was baulked and rebuffed by members of his own Order, it is surely probable in the highest degree that they played a large part in the reaction which M. Bremond seems inclined to attribute solely to the Jansenists. But besides the direct and positive opposition there was perhaps another, a negative way in which the Jesuits helped to block the stream of contemplative devotion and to divert it towards meditation and moralizing. There can be no question that, in spite of lofty ideals and genuine piety, the Society, by its precepts and its handling of Penance, promoted that lax morality in which the dying Pascal, freed from party spirit, reconciled in heart to Rome, saw the Enemy (cf. the *Mémoires* of M. Beurrier in Jovy *Pascal inédit* ii p. 491). The truth is that the substitution of external authority for the voice of conscience is bound to have lamentable results, even when that authority is as venerable as the noble Jesuits to whom M. Bremond introduces us. And in the seventeenth century, Probabilism, of itself a harmless, necessary aid to confession, was often used by penitents, without condemnation by the confessor, not to solve honest doubts, its legitimate function, but to find excuse for continuing in sin.

No wonder then that in a corrupt age not only a genius like Pascal, but commonplace men like Nicole, turned all their attention to morals. Now when morals occupy the field of vision there is little room for mystical contemplation. Had Nicole been mystically minded, which he was not, he must have put it all aside in order to fight *la morale relâchée*. If this contention is sound, then the Jesuits are under two heads responsible, no less than their arch-foes, for the reaction against mysticism. Having uttered this *caveat*, I can only bid the reader go and take his pastime with M. Bremond. He will find himself in a large room, walking in a Paradise of Saints, some of them too obscure to have a place in the all-comprehensive *Biographie universelle*, who deserve the praise and loving treatment which they get from their historian—Mme Acarie, Mme Helyot, Yves de Paris, and a host of others. In dealing with them, as with the rest, M. Bremond displays uncommon insight, an unerring grasp of catholic principles, and a range of reading which few of his countrymen possess. He is entirely at home in England. His studies of Newman (*Développement du dogme chrétien, Psychologie de la foi*) are probably known to many, and admirable they are. But his familiarity with English thought and letters extends far beyond and on either side of Newman. Miranda's cry 'How beauteous mankind is!' is the motto for his first volume. He knows at first hand John Wesley and Charles Simeon, Thomas Goodwin, George Herbert;

Mrs Humphry Ward (where, by the way, is Christina Rossetti?), all of whom serve their turn with a reference, a comparison, a quotation. He expresses regret that he has not time or knowledge to follow out the parallel movement in seventeenth-century England, and the influence of Saint François de Sales on our writers. We rebut the latter excuse and we wish that he would put his hand to the task.

To return to the work before us, we believe that it deserves a place beside Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* for its portraiture, and beside Baron Fr. von Hügel's *Mystical Element in Religion* for its psychology; and there can be no higher praise.

Volume iv, containing a delicious study of *La Mère Agnès* and *La Prière de Pascal*, is the one which will probably appeal most to English readers, and it will reward them. But on it I have two remarks to make. (1) It is strange that M. Bremond who explodes so many ancient superstitions should apparently retain that one which represents Pascal as unlearned. Why should he not have read St Bernard? ('Pascal avait-il lu ces textes? Cela me paraît moins certain...,' p. 378.) At the end of his life he had nothing to do but to pray and read. He was no doubt late in coming to theological literature, but once he acquired the time and taste for it, he would have been insatiable. See how he devours the *Pugio Fidei*! No evidence of his erudition should surprise us. (2) I feel that M. Bremond when he approaches Pascal's proof of religion derived from original sin (p. 391) states only half the case. Pascal is not persuaded by the mere fact of man's misery, but by the contrast of his misery and his greatness. It is the difference between what he is and what he was and might be—his corruption and darkness, his high thoughts and hunger for the good, that impels the apologist to find the key to the riddle in the doctrine of a Fall from the divine likeness and original liberty.

Apart from these two points M. Bremond's account of the man who out-Jansened Jansen but was too great a spirit to be held slave by any sect is a notable contribution to the study of one of the most attractive and perplexing figures in history.

H. F. STEWART.

Histoire de la Littérature Latine Chrétienne, par PIERRE DE LABRIOLLE.
(Paris, Société d'Édition 'Les Belles Lettres', 1920.)

THE French Roman Catholic layman, Professor de Labriolle of Poitiers, has already given such signal proof of his competence in the sphere of Christian Latin literature that a comprehensive volume on the subject from his pen is sure of a wide welcome. In the present